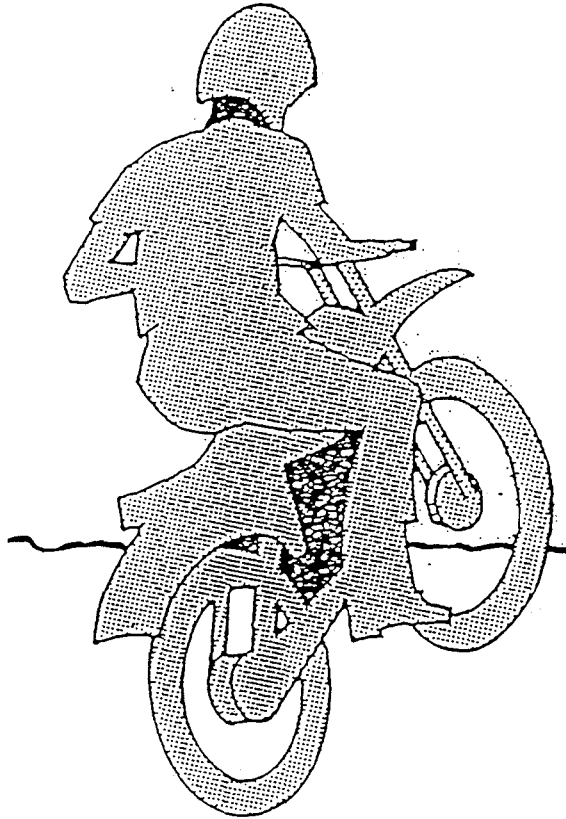


PRAIRIE CITY

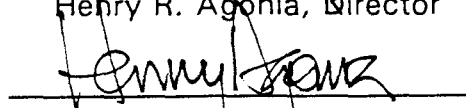
STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA



MASTER PLAN

Adopted July 20, 1991 by the
Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission

Approved September 20, 1991 by
Henry R. Agonias, Director



State of California - The Resources Agency
Department of Parks and Recreation



OFF-HIGHWAY MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION COMMISSON
Seven Members

The Honorable Betty J. MorrisChairman

The Honorable John Motley.....Vice-Chairman

The Honorable Eugene Chappie.....Member

The Honorable Paul Golde.....Member

The Honorable Loren L. Lutz, D.D.S.....Member

The Honorable Hugh McGuigan.....Member

The Honorable Marge Sutton.....Member

PRAIRIE CITY
STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA
MASTER PLAN

May 1991

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Governor
State of California

DOUGLAS WHEELER
Secretary for Resources

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Department of Parks and Recreation
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RELATED DOCUMENTS

This planning effort was initiated as a result of Chapter 1210 of the Statutes of 1988. Related documents available under separate cover that relate to this Master Plan are:

1. The Environmental Impact Report for this Master Plan.
2. The Feasibility Analysis of the proposed concession operation of Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA).
3. The Bid Prospectus for concession operation of Prairie City SVRA.

Copies of these documents may be obtained from the OHMVR Division.

SENATE BILL NO. 2659
CHAPTER 8812.10

Introduced by Senator Doolittle
February 19, 1988

An act to amend and supplement the Budget Act of 1988 by adding Section 3790-494 to Section 2.00 thereof, relating to off-highway motor vehicles, making an appropriation therefor, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take affect immediately.

Legislative Counsel's Digest

SB 2659, as amended, Doolittle. Prairie City Off-Highway Vehicle Park: Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area.

Existing law requires the Department of Parks and Recreation to manage state vehicular recreation areas. Existing law authorizes the appropriation of moneys in the Off-Highway Vehicle Fund for local assistance grants for off-highway motor vehicle purposes and for purposes of the state vehicular recreation area and trail system.

This bill would authorize the department to enter into an operating agreement with the County of Sacramento to operate the Prairie City Off-Highway Vehicle Park as a state vehicular recreation area until it is transferred to the state. The bill would appropriate \$1,008,000 from the fund to the department, with \$195,000 for the acquisition of Sacramento County's interest in the Prairie City Off-Highway Vehicle Park and \$813,000 in augmentation of the Budget Act of 1988, for department support costs for the 1988-89 fiscal year which are related to that off-highway vehicle park. The bill would require the department to complete a concessions proposal for the park which is ready for bid in the 1990-91 fiscal year.

The bill would also amend and supplement the Budget Act of 1988 to reappropriate \$1,584,000 to the department for construction at the Ocotillo Wells State Recreation Area, and would make the funds available for expenditure until June 30, 1989.

The bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote 2/3. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal Committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION I. The Department of Parks and Recreation may enter into an operating agreement with the County of Sacramento to operate the Prairie City Off-Highway Vehicle

Park as a state vehicular recreation area until the transfer to the state is completed.

SEC. 2. The sum of one million eight hundred thousand dollars (\$1,800,000) is hereby appropriated from the Off-Highway Vehicle Fund to the Department of Parks and Recreation for expenditure as follows:

(a) One hundred ninety-five thousand dollars (\$195,000) for acquisition of the real property interest of the County of Sacramento in the Prairie City Off-Highway Vehicle Park.

(b) Eight hundred thirteen thousand dollars (\$813,000), in augmentation of Item 3790-001-001 of the Budget Act of 1988 and the establishment of eight personnel years for support of the department for 1988-89 fiscal year for personal services and operating expenses and equipment related to the Prairie City Off-Highway Vehicle Park. The eight personnel years shall be for a limited term not to exceed three years. The department shall complete a concessions proposal for the park which is ready for bid in the 1990-91 fiscal year.

SEC. 3. Item 3790-494 is added to Section 2.00 of the Budget Act of 1988 (Chapter 313, Statutes of 1988), to read:

3790-494 - Reappropriation, Department of Parks and Recreation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of law, the appropriation of \$1,584,000 made by Item 3790-301-263(3), Budget Act of 1987, for initial development construction for Ocotillo Wells SVRA, is reappropriated to the department, and shall be available for expenditure until June 30, 1989.

SEC. 4. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

In order to open the Prairie City Off-Highway Vehicle Park as soon as possible, and in order that the Ocotillo Wells State Vehicle Recreation Area initial development project, which is completely designed and ready to proceed for construction, which would require continued operations from an inadequate temporary office and no maintenance facility during a period when acquisition of lands to the Ocotillo Wells State Vehicle Recreation Area is growing, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.

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PRAIRIE CITY STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA (SVRA)

INTRODUCTION

This document is the Master Plan for future development, operation, and resource management of Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA).

Unit Identification

Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) covering approximately 836 acres is located in eastern Sacramento County. The unit is located approximately 20 miles east of downtown Sacramento and 3 miles south of U.S. Highway 50 (see Map #1 - Regional Orientation map.) The primary access to the unit from U.S. 50 is to take Prairie City Road south to Whiterock Road and turn west a mile and a half to the main entrance. An alternate route is to exit U.S. Highway 50 at Sunrise Blvd. travelling south on Sunrise to Whiterock Road and east on Whiterock Road approximately 7 miles to the unit entrance.

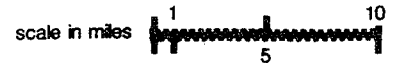
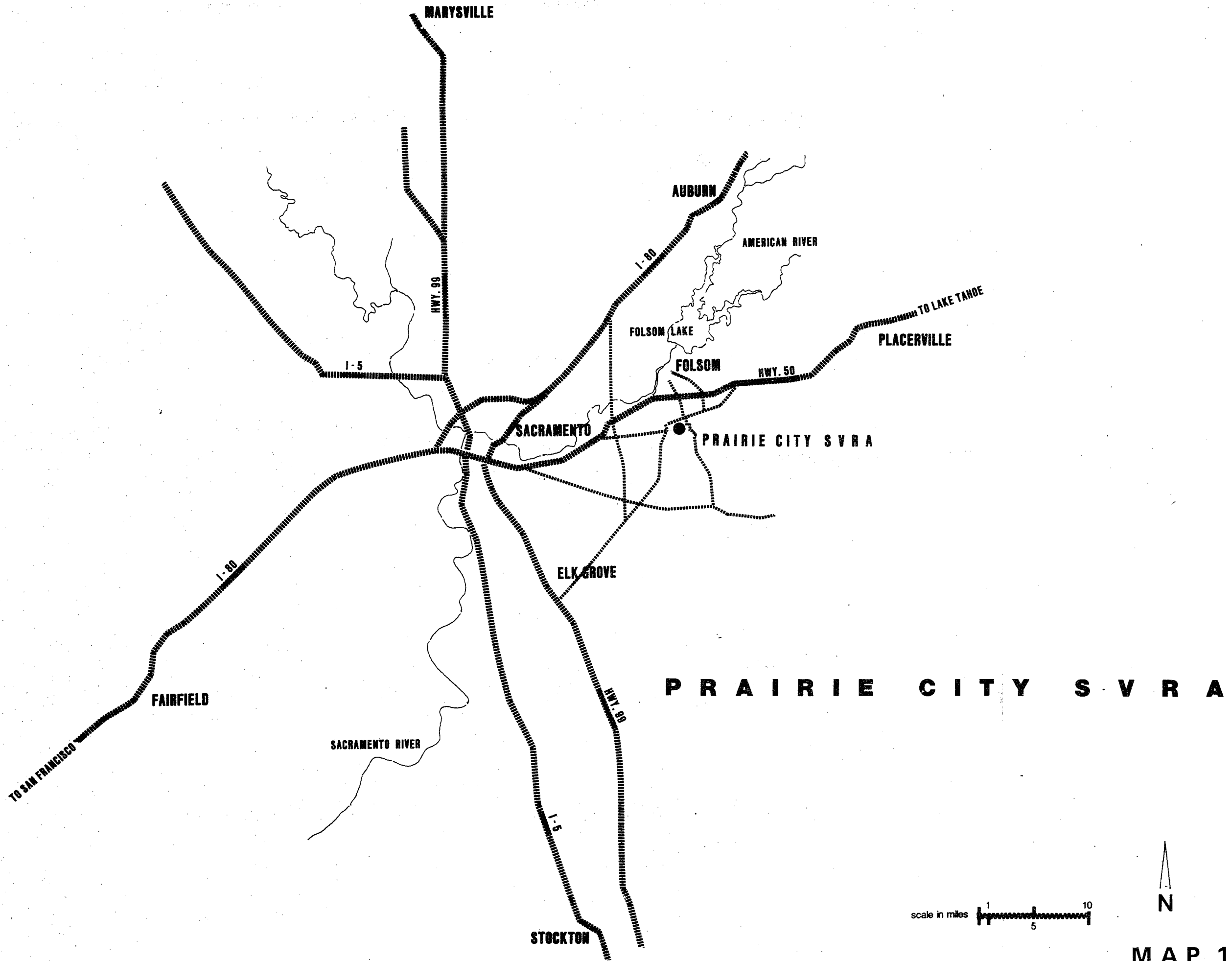
The majority of the western portion of the unit is covered with piles of rock cobbles (dredger tailings) deposited during hydraulic gold mining operations. The cobbles area is vegetated with grass, thistle and scattered cottonwood trees. The eastern portion of the unit is rolling hills and vegetative cover is open grass land and oak woodland.

The unit is made available for public use as an Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Facility for such off-highway vehicles as motorcycles, 4-wheel drives, dune buggies, all-terrain cycles, and minicycles. The unit was operated by Sacramento County from 1975 to 1986 through funding from the State Off-Highway Vehicle Fund. The County closed Prairie City OHV Park in 1986 to casual riding. The state reopened the facility in April of 1989 as a State Vehicular Recreation Area.

The land surrounding Prairie City on the east, south, and west is primarily grazing land. The 12,000 acres to the north are owned by Aerojet General Corporation and operated as a rocket propulsion manufacturing facility.

Source of Program Direction

The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Act of 1988 recognizes there is a demand for off-highway vehicle recreation and requires the Department of Parks and Recreation to administer a comprehensive program to provide for acquisition, management, and operation of lands for this form of recreation.



MAP 1

DESIGNED LWH	DATE	REVISIONS	RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION	APPROVED _____ DATE _____ PRAIRIE CITY SVRA - MASTER PLAN REGIONAL ORIENTATION	DRAWING No. 26615.03
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CHECKED HMB					

Purpose of the Plan

The need for a public off-road vehicle facility in Sacramento was recognized in the early 1970's with increased motorcycle riding on the American River Parkway. Sacramento County Parks Department made a purchase of land in 1975 and 1976 which became Prairie City OHV Park. Sacramento County stopped operating the facility for casual use in 1986. The State OHMVR Program is now full owner and operator of the facility.

Chapter 1210/88 which authorized funding for Prairie City SVRA also required a bid package be let for a concession operation of the unit. OHMVR Commission policy requires an approved Master Plan on which to base a proposed concession operation.

This Master Plan is intended to guide future acquisition, land use, development, and operation of the unit. The precise design of facilities, configuration of new use areas, and nature of programs and concession arrangements will be further refined when implementation of specific aspects of the Master Plan are funded through the budget process.

Objectives of the Plan

The Master Plan attempts to meet the following broad objectives:

1. Develop the land base and facilities needed to meet current and future OHV recreation demands for Sacramento County and the surrounding area.
2. Maintain soil and habitat standards, and protect other natural and cultural resources.
3. Promote interpretation of riding safety and provide OHV educational information.
4. Provide interpretation of the natural environment which occurs at Prairie City SVRA.
5. Provide base information for a concession bid package for total operation of the unit by a private firm or business.
6. Provide opportunities for concession services, OHV facilities, and special events when appropriate.

PRAIRIE CITY STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA (SVRA)

SUMMARY

This summary is a quick reference for the resource management guidelines, facility and site improvements, and operations goals for Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area. These are more fully discussed under their respective sections (elements) of this Master Plan.

OVERVIEW OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

The resource management guidelines summarized below are intended to protect the natural and cultural resources of the unit, thereby providing direction for future development efforts.

- * Soil and habitat loss should be minimized by compliance with Chapter 1027/87, the Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Act of 1988.
- * Design drainage crossings to minimize environmental impact.
- * Continue monitoring on-site test wells and domestic wells.
- * Further testing is required in Area 39 before opening to public use.
- * Facilities development should adhere to building requirements for the Vleck, Pentz, and the Hadselville soil series.
- * Vernal pools should be protected from OHV impacts.
- * Plantings of native and exotic plants for the purposes shade, aesthetics, and erosion control should be planned in areas of intense use.
- * Vehicle traffic around native Oak trees should be restricted at the drip line.
- * Areas of Elderberry vegetation should be protected from vandalism.
- * Controlled burns should be prescribed for areas of high fire potential such as sites within the open grassland.
- * Middens shall be protected, however if development of the site is necessary, excavation of the site shall occur under direction of an archeologist.

- * Signs explaining the significance of historic resources should be placed where appropriate.
- * The Scott Road Scenic corridor buffer zone should be maintained along the eastern boundary of the unit.
- * Maximum noise levels for off-highway motor vehicles identified in the California Vehicle Code should be enforced.
- * Interpretive information for users should cover natural features, history, and OHV riding information.
- * All vehicles using the unit for OHV recreation shall be equipped with a legal muffler, an effective spark arrester and currently registered.

OVERVIEW OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED PUBLIC FACILITIES

Keeping in mind that the primary goal of the plan is to maintain riding opportunity at a minimum of cost, existing facilities that meet that criteria will remain and a few proposed facilities will be added to expand the opportunity.

EXISTING FACILITIES:

Buffer Zone - This area is set aside for protection of Vernal Pools and to comply with the County of Sacramento's 500' buffer zone requirement on Scott Road, a county scenic highway.

Mud Drag - Two race lanes and safety barriers.

Off Road Car Track - Parking, fenced staging.

Pro Moto-Cross Track - Parking, safety fenced, start gate, water and electricity.

2 Practice Tracks - Safety fenced, ramadas, tables, stoves.

Staging Area - Parking, sanitary facilities, ramadas, tables, stoves, water and trees.

1/4 Midget Track - Parking, 1/4 mile track, bleachers, officials tower, concession buildings.

PROPOSED FACILITIES - The following are those facilities identified on the plan that will be implemented when user demand shows the need.

Food and parts concession

Permanent sanitary facilities to serve the day to day demand.

4X4 obstacle course

A sand drag course

An additional staging area

A third practice track

A go-cart track

PRAIRIE CITY STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA (SVRA)

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process for an OHV unit must include gaining a knowledge of the guidelines for the program. It is important to read the enabling legislation, the OHV Act of 1988. This law along with OHMVR Commission Policy sets direction for the program. This was the beginning point of the Master Plan development for Prairie City SVRA.

The Process

The process used in preparing the Master Plan was comprehensive, examining a broad range of concerns related to the continued operation of Prairie City SVRA. The main topics considered included; public and governmental roles, physical resources, existing land use, public needs, demand for expansion, access, and legal constraints.

There were five main steps used to produce the Prairie City Master Plan: Resource Inventory, Resource Analysis, Synthesis, Development of Alternatives, and the Development of a Single Plan.

The natural resources inventoried for this Master Plan include climate, topography, hydrology, geology, soils, and plant and animal life. Information was also collected on cultural, aesthetic, and recreational resources, as well as property ownership status. Resource information was obtained through file and literature searches, field observation, and public/agency review and comment. This information was summarized, and is contained in the Resource Element of this Master Plan. Full documentation of the resource data is on file with the State Department of Parks and Recreation in Sacramento.

Prairie City SVRA is a unit designated to serve the public with Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation opportunity being its prime resource. The natural and cultural resources were evaluated to determine what appropriate management policies would be needed to protect, enhance, or restore sensitive and important resources. Knowledge of recreation and natural resources provided definition for land use and intensity levels which were considered appropriate and manageable, and which provided parameters for the planning options.

Alternative plans were generated to explore use of existing, and proposed OHV facilities, as well as various land pattern arrangements. The unit is not large enough to accommodate all of the OHV needs of the community. Ways were sought to maximize

use for fulfillment of OHV demand in the area. Although the primary goal of the program is to provide for casual riding, tracks will accommodate more people per square foot of area in a safe manner than open casual use.

Early in the process an advisory committee per OHMVR Commission policy was created to assist with the planning for the SVRA. Graphic land use plans including some facility improvements were developed following a general public meeting and several advisory committee meetings. After discussing many alternate proposals, the advisory committee members broke into teams of two or three and were given base maps and asked to develop land use plans of their choice. Through a discussion of these land use plans, a single plan was forged.

The limitation of the size of the unit was recognized by the committee and they recommended that the Master Plan include acquisition as a solution to needed additional recreation opportunity.

Public Involvement

The public was able to express their interests and concerns at all stages in the planning process. During the acquisition and operation by the County many local citizens were involved in the planning efforts and became very knowledgeable about issues connected with this facility. Their knowledge and experience were invaluable in the development of the Master Plan.

During the planning process the State began interim operation of the facility. This operation established a level of public service which planners and publics could use as a base of service and also provided a better index of need for certain facilities. Since the advisory committee members each represented large segments of the public they were heavily relied on as representatives of their various groups.

Public Meetings

Public involvement began and ended with general public meetings. All meetings in between were advisory committee meetings. The last opportunity to express concerns to the plan will be the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission meeting. The following is a list of meetings participated in by the public during the planning process.

1. February 15, 1989

A general public meeting held at Rancho Cordova High School with 150 people present. This was a start-up meeting intended to hear the public concerns.

ANALYSIS

2. September 1989 Advisory Committee Appointed
3. March 6, 1990 Advisory Meeting
4. March 22, 1990 Advisory Meeting
5. April 17, 1990 Advisory Meeting
6. May 22, 1990 Advisory Meeting

DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES

7. June 19, 1990 Advisory Meeting
8. September 25, 1990 Advisory Meeting
9. October 23, 1990 Advisory Meeting

COMPOSE A SINGLE PLAN

10. November 20, 1990 Advisory Meeting
11. December 5, 1990 General Public Meeting held in the SMUD Auditorium (about 60 people present). This meeting was held to share with the general public the Prairie City SVRA Master Plan shown on Map #5.

PRAIRIE CITY STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA (SVRA)

RESOURCE ELEMENT

IA. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The Public Resource Code (Section 5002.2b) broadly defines the purpose of the Resource Element in the General Plan. This Resource Element serves a similar purpose in this Master Plan.

The resource element in this master plan will evaluate the unit as a constituent of an ecological region and as a distinct ecological entity, based upon historical and ecological research of plant-animal and soil-geological relationships and shall contain a declaration of purpose, setting forth specific long-range management objectives for the unit consistent with the unit's classification as an SVRA. This element will also contain policy sections which will set forth the precise actions and limitations required for the achievement of the objectives established in the declaration of purpose.

Unit Description

Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area (PCSVRA) is situated in northeastern Sacramento County, approximately 13 miles east of Sacramento, and four miles south of Folsom. This area, within the Sacramento Valley, has been characterized as Great Valley landscape province, Great Valley ecological region, and California grassland province. The American River lies approximately 3 miles to the north, the Cosumnes River approximately 7 miles to the south, and the Sacramento River approximately 17 miles to the west. The portion of Folsom Lake State Recreation Area known as Lake Natoma is located three miles north of PCSVRA. Folsom Lake is 5.5 miles north/northeast of the unit. PCSVRA occupies 836 acres and is situated in the Buffalo Creek 7.5 min. quad in portions of Sections 25 and 36 T9N R7E, and portions of Sections 30 and 31 T9N R8E (Mount Diablo Baseline and Meridian).

Landmarks on the unit are primarily man-made structures. This is due to the relatively unvaried topography and general lack of highly visible features. With the possible exception of Coyote Hill (located in the eastern section, above the Hangtown motocross track), no notable natural landmarks occur on the unit. This rounded hill is one of the highest spots in the entire unit and can be seen from many areas. Man-made landmarks are the test-firing pit, the "moon room", the water tower, and park headquarters. The test firing-pit is a large rectangular

pit with approximate dimensions of 630 x 70 x 35 feet deep. The "moon room" is a dome-shaped building which housed the viewing and control rooms for rocket motor testing. These two structures are located in the south central section of the unit. The large water tank built for rocket testing operations is located near park headquarters in the southwestern section of the unit. This tank is currently fully functional and used to supply domestic water. Park headquarters, located in the southwest corner of the unit, currently consists of a trailer, a newly paved parking lot, and a storage facility for equipment.

PCSVRA is within a 30 minute drive of both downtown Sacramento and Placerville (El Dorado County), via U.S. Highway 50 which runs east-west approximately 3 miles to the north. The unit can be accessed from any of four roads. From U.S. Highway 50, the Prairie City Road off-ramp may be taken south to where it intersects White Rock Road. This intersection is at the northeast corner of the unit. White Rock Road is the northern boundary of the unit, extending west beyond Sunrise Boulevard and east beyond Latrobe Road. From the southwest, Grantline Road can be taken north to White Rock Road and from the southeast, Scott Road can be taken north, also to White Rock Road. The unit entrance is located at the northwest corner of the unit along White Rock Road. Entrance into the riding area is south on this access road and through a gate near park headquarters.

IB. Resource Summary

Natural Resources

Topography: PCSVRA lies near the upper eastern limit of the Great Valley geomorphic province. Topography of this region is transitional from the flat valley floor to the rolling hills of the western Sierra Nevada. The unit generally ranges from almost flat in the western section, to quite hilly in the eastern section. Between these two areas, the landscape is rolling. Elevation on the unit range from 240 feet to 350 feet.

Three sources of topographic change have been: construction of several siltation ponds, possible encroachment by a neighboring aggregate mining operation, and erosion at specific sites due to inherent soil/slope characteristics and/or use. Topographic data have been updated by field survey (see RI).

Meteorology: A dominant factor in the weather of northern California is the semi-persistent high pressure area of the north Pacific Ocean. This pressure center moves northward in the summer, diverting storms to the north of the state. As a result, California receives little or no precipitation during the summer. In winter, the Pacific high retreats southward

permitting storm centers to swing across California. These storms bring widespread, moderate precipitation in the Sacramento Valley. A typical winter storm brings intermittent rain over a period from 2 to 5 days, followed by from 7 to 14 days of dry weather.

Temperature data at PCSVRA is extrapolated from four weather stations surrounding the site. Average temperature ranges for January and July are 37-54 and 58-95 (degrees F), respectively. Annual average precipitation on-site, extrapolated from the four stations, is between 18-24 inches per year. Most precipitation is received during the period from November through April. Snow is an extremely rare event. Relative humidity varies inversely with temperature on a diurnal and annual basis. Average minima typically occur on late July afternoons, while average maxima occur on early January mornings. High nighttime winter humidities frequently lead to the formation of a shallow layer of ground fog ("tule fog") when moist air is cooled by contact with the ground. Dense fog (defined as visibility less than 0.25 mile) occurs an average of 35 days per year. The Sacramento area averages 288 days of sunshine per year.

Southerly winds are the strongest and most prevalent at PCSVRA. These winds are probably the result of channeling of the prevailing winds through the Carquinez Straits, a narrow gap in the coastal mountains to the southwest. Occasionally, a north/south barometric pressure gradient can develop which results in a strong flow of warm, dry air from the north. These infrequent winds produce heat waves in the summer.

The Sacramento Valley is one of the largest air basins in California, and has a high air pollution potential. Present air quality problems result from extensive industrial, agricultural, and urban development, and especially from the widespread and increasing use of motor vehicles. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the Air Pollution Control District monitor the five major air pollutants; O₃, CO, suspended particulate matter, NO₂, and SO₂. Federal standards for NO₂ and SO₂ are being met throughout the valley. The most recent data show continuing violations of the federal standards for O₃, CO, and suspended particulate matter.

Hydrology: Generally, PCSVRA slopes and drains south. There are 12 small watersheds in the unit, varying in size from 10 to 40 acres. Watersheds on the eastern portion of the unit drain to Coyote Creek, the single well-defined intermittent drainage. The western portion of the unit drains south and southwest. Areas draining south eventually drain to Laguna Creek.

With the exceptions of dredge tailings, soils at the unit have

slow to very slow infiltration and permeability rates. These soils have high runoff potential. OHV use has exacerbated runoff potential by denuding soils of vegetation and exposing them to erosion by wind and water. In the area covered by dredge tailings, soils have moderate infiltration and permeability rates. Runoff potential is not so severe.

Available data indicate groundwater gradients slope southwest into the valley. Depth to groundwater has varied from 132 to 147 feet (with no discernible trend) over the last ten years. The unit is not constrained by potential for flooding or a high water table. Local groundwater is contaminated with organic compounds, most probably emanating from the neighboring Aerojet General facility, to the northwest. Despite this groundwater contamination, the on-site water supply well is tested monthly and meets California Department of Health Services (CDHS) standards for domestic use.

Geology: PCSVRA lies within the Great Valley geomorphic province. This province, a nearly horizontal alluvial plain, is approximately 450 miles long with an average width of 50 miles. The Great Valley of California is drained by two river systems, the Sacramento and the San Joaquin, whose tributaries have built up the alluvial deposits that cover the floor. Both drain to the San Francisco Bay.

The geology of the valley is described as a large, elongate, northwest-trending, asymmetric, structural trough filled with a very thick sequence (up to 6,000 feet) of sediments, primarily of marine origin, and ranging in age from Jurassic to Recent:

The first geologic event pertinent to the discussion of the history of the Great Valley is the formation of the ancestral Sierra Nevada in the late Jurassic to Early Cretaceous time (the Nevadan orogeny). During the Cretaceous, great quantities of rock were removed from the mountains and deposited into an ancestral sea to the west. The Sierra Nevada were planed down to an area of lower relief and topography.

Beginning in the middle to late Eocene and continuing sporadically into Miocene time, volcanic activity again uplifted the Sierra Nevada mountains. This activity waned in the later part of the Pliocene and erosion of the Sierra Nevada once again deposited sediments into the Great Valley.

Deposition of these fluviatile sediments was terminated by a significant uplift or a series of uplifts that elevated the Sierra Nevada to near its present altitude during early Pleistocene or late Pliocene.

Rejuvenated streams cut into the relatively soft sediments of the Great Valley that had been deposited during the late Pliocene (called the Laguna Formation). Most of the detritus was carried westward and deposited near the axis of the valley.

Eventually, the valley floor filled in to its present topographic dimensions. Under the present regimen, streams are eroding the low alluvial plains and dissected uplands and aggrading the river flood plains, channels, alluvial fans, and flood basins.

PCSVRA is underlain by a number of distinct rock types. From youngest to oldest they are: 1) the Pliocene age Laguna Formation, 2) the Miocene-Pliocene age Mehrten Formation, 3) the Eocene age Ione Formation, 4) Jurassic age Gopher Ridge volcanics and, 5) the Jurassic age Salt Springs Slate. In addition, dredge tailings from historic river placer gold mining operations cover portions of the park.

A review of published geologic reports indicates that geologically significant features, such as unique minerals, paleontological sites, or special geomorphic features are not present on-site. Bedrock landsliding does not occur at the unit, or in the immediate vicinity. The potential for landsliding is considered very low.

Volcanic hazards at PCSVRA are considered very low. Active or potentially active volcanic zones are not located near the site. The nearest active or potentially active volcanic zone is located approximately 100 miles northeast of the unit, near Lake Tahoe.

No active mines are registered on-site. Located immediately north of PCSVRA is an active quarry. This quarry produces sand and gravel for aggregate base material. Potential mineral products from the unit would include sand and gravel aggregate and clay, based upon the types of rocks known to underlie the unit and the mining history of the area. The existing and future land use of PCSVRA should not constitute a potential loss of mineral resources.

The potential for seismic activity at PCSVRA is relatively high (as it is for all of California). Earthquakes may result from movement of the San Andreas Fault Zone or the Foothills Fault System (until recently, believed to be inactive). The Maximum Credible Earthquake for the Foothills System is Richter magnitude 6.5. This quake would produce estimated peak ground acceleration of 0.13 g.

Soils: PCSVRA is located in California Soil Region IV, the Sacramento Valley Region. Region IV is characterized by igneous

alluvium on the east side of the Sacramento Valley, and about 15 to 35 inches of annual rainfall. Native vegetation consists of grasses and grass-oak communities. This region occupies about four percent of California's land area. Soils vary depending on parent material, drainage, and other locally prevailing geomorphic forces. PCSVRA is typical of this region, and does not include any landforms, parent material, or other characteristics which would represent a departure from the generalized description.

Ten different soil map units are identified on the site: Creviscreek Sandy Loam; Hadselville-Pentz Complex; Mokelumne Gravelly Loam; Mokelumne-Pits, Mine Complex; Pentz-Lithic Xerorthents Complex; Red Bluff Loam; Red Bluff-Redding Complex; Red Bluff-Xerorthents Complex; Redding Gravelly Loam; and Vleck Gravelly Loam.

Surface soil depth ranges from nine inches for the Hadselville series to twenty-one inches for the Creviscreek series. Textures range from sandy loam to loam. High salinity is not a problem. Electrical conductivities for all area soils are well below 4.0 mmhos/cm. Soil pH ranges from 4.5 to 6.5. These slightly acid levels reflect the acidic nature of sedimentary parent materials. These pH values facilitate ion exchange and nutrient availability upon periodic soil wetting.

Subsurface soil depths range from seven inches to fifty-two inches. Textures range from sandy loam to clay. High salinity is not a problem. Soil pH ranges from 4.5 to 8.4. Subsurface salinity and pH each favor root respiration and nutrient uptake, and are favorable for plant growth.

Parent materials include mixed sedimentary alluvium, weakly consolidated andesitic tuffaceous sediments, and marine sedimentary alluvium high in kaolinite.

In addition to erosion by water and wind, other physical constraints and sensitivities occur for site soils. Specifically, high shrink-swell potential constrains the use of the Vleck series for building uses. These include the following:

- Dwellings with or without basements
- Small commercial buildings
- Local roads and streets.

The Pentz and Hadselville series are sensitive to uses which require soil depths exceeding about sixteen inches. All series have severe limitations for use as septic tank absorption fields.

Soils at the unit may have been contaminated due to burning of chemical wastes by a former owner (i.e., Aerojet General Corporation). This potential is confined to a single 90-acre area in the southeast portion of the unit (commonly known as Area 39). Under current use plans, this potential contamination is not considered a health hazard by the California Department of Health Services.

Plant Life PCSVRA is located near the eastern rim of the Great Valley Landscape Province and within the California Floristic Province. This region is characterized by Valley Grassland and intermittent foothill (oak) woodlands.

Plant life at PCSVRA has been categorized into three distinct plant communities: open grassland, cottonwood woodland, and oak woodland. The open grassland community, located in the middle of the unit, is comprised mostly of introduced Mediterranean grasses and forbs. Wild oats and brome are the dominants of this area.

The cottonwood woodland occupies the western one third of the unit. This plant community was created by gold dredging operations in the 1930s that presumably disrupted subsurface hydrology. Large cottonwoods dot the area. Willows, elderberry, and coyote brush are also common in this plant community while the dominant ground cover species is star thistle. Elderberry is of interest to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) because it constitutes potential habitat for the Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (discussed below).

On the easternmost arm of the unit is the oak woodland. This community is characteristic of the open grassland, but with the addition of 64 blue oak and 2 valley oak trees.

Aquatic vegetation on-site is very limited. One small pond is the only body of water that lingers for most of the year. Siltation ponds and intermittent drainages are present but support little or no aquatic vegetation.

Vernal pools, classified by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) as sensitive habitat, occur in two areas of the unit. These habitats are small temporary ponds which form above a hardpan or claypan layer during winter/spring runoff. They dry completely by summer. These pools contain unique flora often with narrowly endemic species. A thorough botanical survey was conducted in the spring of 1985 for potentially rare and endangered plants, many of which have been reported in nearby off-site vernal pools. Only one species was noted to occur in these off-site vernal pools; Bogg's Lake dodder. Bogg's Lake dodder is considered a Category 3 Candidate species

by the USFWS and a list 4 species by CNPS (these are species being considered for listing in the future).

Animal Life: Animal life at PCSVRA has yet to be intensively inventoried, but based upon expected plant/animal associations, is comprised of three biotic communities. These animal communities correspond to the plant communities of open grassland, oak woodland, and cottonwood woodland. Each community provides habitat for several species of wildlife.

The open grassland encompasses much of the central portion of the unit. The majority of the plants are introduced grasses and provide an important food source for a variety of invertebrates, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. Common animal species using the open grassland include the whiptail lizard, northern pacific rattlesnake, California kingsnake, western meadowlark, savannah sparrow, black-shouldered kite, red-tailed hawk, turkey, black-tailed jackrabbit, deer mouse, coyote, and black-tailed deer. This grassland also provides foraging habitat for species dependent on the adjacent woodland communities.

The oak woodland community is dominated by mature blue oaks, with grasses and forbs in the understory. The oak woodland occurs on the eastern side of the unit and generally is associated with the Coyote Creek drainage. The oaks provide essential nest sites and cover for many bird species using the area; species such as the acorn woodpecker and scrub jay are particularly dependent on the oaks for food and cover. Other animals utilizing the oak woodland are the western fence lizard and several species of invertebrates. The cottonwood woodland is located in the western half of the unit. Cottonwood, willows, elderberries, and star thistle are the dominant plants occurring in this community. Common wildlife species expected in this community are the yellow warbler, Bewick's wren, and Pacific treefrog.

The vernal pools at Prairie City harbor several aquatic invertebrates. A study completed in October 1990 identified four species of eubranchiopods and numerous other invertebrates inhabiting the pools. The shrimp include one fairy shrimp, Lindereilla occidentalis, a tadpole shrimp, Lepidurus packardii and two clam shrimp, Lynceus brachyurus and Cyzicus elongatus californicus. The fairy shrimp and tadpole shrimp have been petitioned for listing by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

No rare, threatened, or endangered species were observed in the unit, but potential habitat (i.e., elderberry plants) for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle (VELB) occurs at the unit. This beetle is listed by the USFWS as "threatened". Additionally, C DPR personnel report the occurrence of Swainson's

hawks at the unit. Swainson's hawks are listed by CDFG as "threatened" by CDFG. Both species (and their habitat) are legally protected.

Ecology: The unit occurs in the Great Valley Ecological Province. The ecosystems at PCSVRA are: terrestrial, wetlands, and aquatic. The terrestrial component occupies most of the unit, while wetland and aquatic habitats are only minor components. Three forms of terrestrial ecosystems occur on-site: open grassland, cottonwood woodland, and oak woodland. Wetlands are the vernal pools; aquatic areas are the siltation ponds.

This unit is significant ecologically due to the presence of vernal pools and the presence of potential habitat for the Valley elderberry longhorn beetle. Vernal pools are considered an sensitive habitat by CDFG. They often support rare plants and animals. One sensitive plant, on the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) "watch list," has been identified on-site (Bogg's Lake dodder).

Six ecological units have been designated for management purposes: 1) open grassland, 2) cottonwood woodland, 3) oak woodland, 4) vernal pools, 5) elderberry plants, and 6) the watershed system.

Cultural Resources

Archeological Sites: Prehistoric finds include a potential ochre (pigment) quarry, an isolated basalt flake, and an associated find of three flaked artifacts. These artifacts may indicate the presence of a midden although no specific site placement was located.

Standing Structures: Three standing structures that date from the Aerojet rocket development period include: a large rocket motor test pit, a control building for viewing the testing, and a large water tank originally used in the cooling process. These structures may be of interest to those who follow space/military history.

Ethnographic and Historic Background: PCSVRA lies within the geographic province of the Valley Nisenan Maidu. The Maidu people occupied the eastern portions of the middle and lower Sacramento Valley and Sierra Nevada foothills. Food resources included acorns and other nuts, seeds, fruits and berries, roots and bulbs, deer, antelope, elk, rabbits, squirrels, and mice. Those living along major streams and sloughs subsisted primarily on fish and shellfish.

Ethnographic information on villages in this area has been

difficult to obtain because of the Euro-American disturbance to native life prior to the beginning of ethnographic studies. It is believed that Nisenan dwellings were circular, semi-subterranean structures of medium to large poles supporting a roof of smaller poles and sticks, covered with a matting, clay and thatch. Sides were of similar construction, sometimes banked with earth. Village areas contained seasonal quarries, ceremonial grounds, trading sites, fishing stations, cemeteries, river crossings, and battlegrounds.

The first Euro-American contact in the project area was believed to be in 1808 by Ensign Gabriel Moraga who explored the Sacramento River Valley. In 1839, Captain John Sutter landed on the banks of the American River in what is now considered midtown Sacramento. The fall of 1845 saw the largest ever immigration of Americans into the Sacramento Valley up to that time via the Truckee and Bear Rivers. Settlements increased in the valley, and more were proposed each year with increasing yields of crops and cattle products. Gold was discovered in 1848 by John Marshall at Coloma on the American River. Gold camps were soon established on the major and minor rivers, resulting in an influx of new immigrants and severe disruption of native resources, as well as disruption to farming activities.

Euro-American settlement in the lower Sacramento Valley area adversely affected the Indian people. Although relatively peaceful and non-interfering, Euro-americans inadvertently brought serious disease. In 1833, a malarial epidemic killed an estimated 75% of the Valley's native population.

Much of the unit was probably originally used as range or farm land. In the 1930s the Capital Dredging Company began a series of dredger operations on the western and southern portions of the unit. Aerojet purchased the land in the 1960s for its rocket testing activities and later (ca 1970) sold it to Roy McGill who removed several standing structures during development of the OHV park in 1973.

Aesthetic Resources

Overall scenic quality at PCSVRA is low, although positive features do exist. Positive scenic features include a blue oak woodland, vernal pools, and the moon room. The oak woodland is a stand of 64 large blue oaks and 2 valley oaks in the eastern section of the unit in an area of variable topography. Several on-site vernal pools are located in the eastern section of the unit, and exhibit a colorful wildflower display in the springtime. The moon room is a domed man-made structure built about 1960 by Aerojet General as a viewing shelter for rocket testing. Large cottonwood trees along the western one third of

the unit are also of scenic value as they break up the monotony of the dredge tailings. Scott Road, which borders the easternmost section of the unit, is a designated scenic highway. The viewshed from this road is a rolling oak woodland. A 500-foot buffer zone has been established along this corridor. Many non-users see OHV trails and user facilities as a negative scenic feature. Such OHV facilities are evident from high areas in the oak woodland area to recreators in the facility. However very little of the OHV trails and facilities area can be seen from perimeter highways.

Auditory impacts at PCSVRA are largely man-made. Ambient noise includes aircraft from Mather Air Force Base, rocket testing at Aerojet General, surface traffic noise from nearby roads, and activity from PCSVRA itself.

Recreation Resources

The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission Policy number 28 is intended to encourage other governmental agencies and the private sector to cooperate with the state in providing opportunity for OHV recreation. Prairie City was operated from 1975 to 1986 by Sacramento County with funding from the OHMVR program. In compliance with this OHMVR Commission Policy and S.B. 2659 a bid package will be advertized before July 1, 1991 inviting bids from the private sector to operate the Prairie City facility.

Recreational uses on the PCSVRA site are exclusively associated with OHVs. The unit consists of tracks/trails for 4-wheel drive vehicles, motorcycles, and other types of motorized off-highway vehicles (OHVs). The site is used primarily by groups for special events sponsored by OHV organizations, which constitutes 70% of the unit's use (by attendance).

Casual riding by individuals or small family groups is permitted two week days and on weekends, and currently, represents a minor use of the unit (30% of the total attendance for January-October, 1989). Spectators comprise as much as 90 percent of the attendance at some special events. Organizations including the Valley Off-Road Racing Association, the American Quarter Midgets Association, Sand Champs, and Dirt Diggers sponsor events throughout the year which have attracted 8000-10,000 visitors.

Facilities at the unit include an administrative center, water supply, parking, and shaded picnic facilities. Two areas are designated for moto-cross use, and contain narrow trails with small hills and bumps. One area, designated for four-wheel drive use, consists of rolling topography and wide trails on hard-packed surfaces.

Potential soil contamination (and/or the cost of investigation/remediation) in Area 39 (described above) also constrains the use of 90 acres in the southwest portion of the unit. Natural constraints on OHV use in the unit include the danger of grass fires during dry summer months. Spark arrestors and restrictions on open fires reduce this hazard.

II. RESOURCE POLICY FORMATION

Classification

PCSVRA has a varied history. Yuba Consolidated Dredging owned the land in the early part of the century and dredging operations were carried out in the 1930s. It was purchased by Aerojet General about 1960 and used for rocket testing activities. Roy and Mary McGill purchased the property in 1972 from the Aerojet General Corporation and opened the McGill cycle park to the public in 1973. The County of Sacramento, Recreation and Parks Department subsequently acquired the property and operated the park from 1975 through 1986. (During 1986-1988 the park was owned by the County, but used for special events only, and was not open to the public.) The State of California began to manage the unit by agreement in July 1988, and the C DPR completed purchase and opened the unit to the public in April 1989. The unit is classified within the State Vehicular Recreation Area and Trail System.

Declaration of Purpose

Chapter 1027 of the Statutes of 1987, the "Off-highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Act of 1988", amended the Public Resources Code. Section 5090.02 of the P.R.C. states that:

- (a) The Legislature finds that off-highway motor vehicles are enjoying an ever-increasing popularity in California and that the indiscriminate and uncontrolled use of those vehicles may have a deleterious impact on the environment, wildlife habitats, native wildlife and native flora.
- (b) The Legislature hereby declares that effectively managed areas and adequate facilities for the use of off-highway vehicles and conservation and enforcement are essential for ecologically balanced recreation.
- (c) Accordingly, it is the intent of the Legislature that:
 - (1) Existing off-highway motor vehicle recreational areas, facilities, and opportunities be expanded and be managed in a manner consistent with this chapter, in particular, to maintain sustained long-term use.
 - (2) New off-highway motor vehicle recreational areas, facilities and opportunities be provided and

managed pursuant to this chapter in a manner that will sustain long-term use.

- (3) When areas or trails or portions thereof cannot be maintained to appropriate standards for sustained long-term use, they shall be closed to use and repaired, to prevent accelerated erosion. Those areas shall remain closed until they can be managed within the soil loss standard or shall be closed and rehabilitated.
- (4) Prompt and effective implementation of the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Program by the Division of Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation shall have an equal priority among other programs in the department.
- (5) Off-Highway motor vehicle recreation be managed in accordance with this chapter through financial assistance to local government and joint undertakings with agencies of the United States.

The unit's primary purpose is to provide controlled OHV recreation opportunities to those in Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado, San Joaquin, Yolo, Solano and adjoining counties. To address, in a specific way, general ecological concerns raised in paragraphs (a) and (b), above, such use should be planned and controlled to preserve and protect on-site resource values. Prime resources at the unit include northern hardpan vernal pools (a CDFG sensitive habitat), oak woodland, frontage to a designated scenic corridor (Scott Rd.), certain historic and (potential prehistoric) cultural resources, and potential habitat for the valley elderberry longhorn beetle (listed as threatened by the USFWS).

Zone of Primary Interest

The immediate zone around the unit is affected by activities at the park, primarily due to noise during special events. Currently, residential density is very low. Surrounding development is confined to an aggregate company and Aerojet General Corporation, both industrial complexes relatively unaffected by current use. According to the Sacramento County Planning Department, zoning in the areas surrounding the unit is M-2* and AG-80**.

The Sacramento County planning department identifies 24 Community Planning Areas (CPA's) within Sacramento County. These areas are based on certain commonalities in physical and social characteristics. PCSVRA is located within Area 22, Cosumnes.

* M-2 is "heavy industrial" zoning.

** AG-80 calls for agricultural plots of 80 acres or larger.

The Cosumnes CPA encompasses the large, undeveloped agricultural area in the eastern section of Sacramento County. It completely surrounds the separate CPA of Rancho Murieta, which is a significant residential development. The small communities of Sloughhouse and Wilton lie within the Cosumnes CPA.

In 1980, Cosumnes had a population of 44 persons (13 families), and median annual income was reported to be \$35,417*** (twice the county median). The projected population for 1995 is 3000. Thus, the Cosumnes area is in transition. If projected growth does occur, the area will be very different by 1995. Increasing density (particularly residential density), may engender future land use conflicts with the unit. For this reason unit planning, development, and operation should incorporate the management policies suggested below.

Resource Management Policies

This section has been prepared according to CDPR guidelines. Problems specific to each resource category are discussed, and specific recommendations are made regarding unit development and operations.

Of particular concern are areas of ecological sensitivity that need to be protected from further damage. Although most of the unit is designated for open riding, sensitive areas do exist. Within these sensitive areas not designated as off-limits to riders (vernal pools, scenic buffer zone), a trail system should be established. This system should strike a balance between challenge to the OHV user (recreation value) and protection of sensitive resource values. The implications of paragraphs (a) and (b) of Public Resources Code Section 5090.02 are that "uncontrolled" use of OHVs may have deleterious ecological impacts on a broad scale.

Natural Resources

Topography: Topographic changes at the unit have resulted from:

1. construction of sedimentation ponds,
2. erosion due to inherent soil characteristics and OHV use, and
3. possible encroachment by the neighboring sand/gravel quarry.

Unit topography is directly related to its value as a recreational resource. The prime concern in managing unit

*** Small sample size renders this value unreliable.

topography is erosion control. Particular attention should be given to those areas with weak soils, and which will be subjected to the most concentrated use. Policy regarding topography overlaps largely with that of soils. Therefore, legislative policy is mentioned here and expounded upon in the soils policy section.

Policy

- Compliance with chapter 1027/87, the Off-Highway Vehicle Act of 1988 will minimize soil loss.

Meteorology: Of concern to air quality is the amount of suspended particulates which may be generated by wind erosion of exposed and denuded soils. This issue may become more controversial as population density immediately surrounding the unit increases (as expected). Revegetation or seeding of these open areas is recommended.

Policy

- None Required

Hydrology: Erosion/sedimentation in surface drainages is of particular concern. Detailed studies are suggested to isolate and prioritize specific problem areas. Groundwater contamination is another concern at the unit. Monitoring of on-site test wells should be continued. Continued periodic testing of the domestic water supply well is essential.

Policy

- Creek crossings will be properly designed and placed according to accepted guidelines. Recommended guidelines are the Forest Practice Rules handbook: California Administrative Code Title 14, Natural Resources, Sections 914.6 and 914.8.
- Monitoring of on-site test wells and the domestic water well will be continued on a periodic basis.

Geology: The major geologic constraint is potential seismicity.

Policy

- The Facilities Element shall address construction standards for earthquake safety. Specifically, structures shall conform to local jurisdiction building

codes and standard practices of the Structural Engineers Association of California.

Soils: Soil constraints include high erosion potential (all series), high shrink/swell potential (Vleck series), and possible soil contamination in Area 39. Map #2 illustrates on-site soil constraints. The Public Resources Code, as amended in 1988, requires the department to adopt soil loss standards. It is required that the division carry out the standards adopted by the department to monitor soils in off-highway vehicle areas. Erosion on the site is a point of concern. An estimated 20% of the land surface has been exposed (denuded of vegetation) due to OHV use. OHV use increases surface soil particle disruption, detachment from underlying soils, and subsequent erosion. Soil erosion has been caused by both water and wind. Periodic closures to OHV use may occur during and after measurable precipitation events, until such time that OHV use would not result in significant damage to soils.

Policy

- To avoid excessive soil loss, compliance with Chapter 1027/87 shall be followed. This chapter provides several guidelines and requirements for the control of excessive soil erosion.
- Seasonal closure - Adapted from CDF Roads and Landings Task Force Handbook. Operations may take place when roads and trails are generally firm and easily passable. Operations and maintenance should not occur when sediment discharged from the roads or trails will reach watercourses or lakes in amounts deleterious to the quality and beneficial uses of water. Problem wet spots on these roads or landings should be rocked or otherwise treated to permit use during wet operating periods.
- Further investigation is required regarding land use changes in Area 39. These include surface, subsurface, and groundwater testing by a qualified party.
- Facilities development should be restricted from the Vleck series, and depending upon design, from the Pentz and Hadselville series.

Plant Life: Plant life at the unit has yet to be extensively inventoried, and such an inventory is recommended. Plant life of particular concern is located in on-site northern hardpan vernal pools, a CDFG sensitive habitat. These pools were inventoried in 1985, and one sensitive plant species was identified. Oak trees at the unit do not appear to be

regenerating at the expected rate (most probably due to proximate OHV use). On-site elderberry offers potential habitat to the Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (listed as threatened by the USFWS).

Policy

- Vernal pools should be protected from OHV use.
- Plantings of native and exotic plants for the purposes of shade and aesthetics may be conducted in areas of intense use. (e.g., staging areas) and in areas highly subject to erosion. Policy regarding potential species is currently being developed by CDPR and should be consulted prior to any new plantings.
- Oak trees should be avoided and protected. Trails should approach no closer than the drip line of any individual tree.
- Elderberries should be protected (fenced and/or posted) from vandalism. If there is adequate distance (>100 meters) from concentrated use areas then fencing and posting are not necessary.

Animal Life: Animal life at the unit has yet to be extensively inventoried, and such an inventory is recommended. Of particular concern to animal life are vernal pools, elderberry, and oaks. Elderberry may provide habitat for the Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (listed by the USFWS as threatened). These trees should be surveyed for emergence holes, and/or utilization by mating adults (during late spring/early summer). Oak trees may provide perches for foraging raptors, including the Swainson's hawk (listed by CDFG as threatened).

Policy

- A wildlife habitat protection plan will be implemented and carried out under the guidelines of PRC Section 5090.35.

This statute, amended in 1988, reads: (part (b)...) The department shall also make an inventory of wildlife populations and their habitats in each area of the system and shall prepare a wildlife habitat protection program to sustain a viable species composition specific to each area, by July 1, 1989. c) The division shall monitor the condition of the soils and wildlife habitat in each area of the system each year in order to determine whether the soil loss standards and habitat

protection plans are being met. d) Upon a determination that the soil loss standard and habitat protection plans are not being met in any area in the system, the department shall direct the division to close temporarily and repair, to prevent accelerated erosion, that area, or portion thereof funded by the Off-Highway Vehicle Fund, until the soil loss standard and habitat protection plans are capable of being met.

- Vernal Pools may provide potential habitat for rare invertebrates. These pools should be protected from accidental damage.
- Elderberry plants should be protected because of their potential to harbor the federally-threatened Valley elderberry longhorn beetle. See specific policy under

plant life.

Ecology: Ecological enhancement to be considered include habitat stratification, grassland management, and preservation of sensitive habitats.

Policy

- Trails should not approach any closer than the drip line of any individual oak trees. Controlled burns may be prescribed for areas of high fire potential such as sites within the open grassland.
- Ecologically sensitive elements, such as the vernal pools, elderberry plants, and the oak woodland should be adequately protected (fenced and/or posted) from accidental encroachment and vandalism.

Cultural Resources: To enhance visitor appreciation of historical resources, the standing structures (i.e., the "moon room", test pit, and water tower) could be posted with signs explaining their significance to military/space history. If economically feasible, the moon room could be improved/remodeled to provide meeting facilities for OHV user organizations.

Isolates located during field survey indicate the possibility of a midden occurring in the southeast portion of the unit.

Policy

- The potentially-occurring midden may have been buried (or

it may have been destroyed). If the hill at this site is to be used by OHVs, another survey will need to be conducted during summer (when vegetation cover is more sparse). If the site is to be developed for facilities, an archeological monitor will be present during excavation.

- Signage explaining the significance of historic resources should be placed where appropriate.

Aesthetic Resources: Aesthetic resources identified at the unit include the scenic corridor along Scott Road, the oak woodland, vernal pools, and the historic resources (i.e., moon room, test pit, and water tower). With the exception of the historic resources (where use should be encouraged), all should be protected against damage from OHV use.

At current use levels, and current population density surrounding the unit, noise pollution does not constitute a problem. Should surrounding density (particularly residential) increase (as expected), noise abatement may become a management concern. In this case, all vehicles should be adequately baffled.

Policy

- The Scott Road Scenic corridor buffer zone will be maintained along the eastern boundary of the unit.
- Maximum noise levels for off-highway motor vehicles identified in Section 38370 (g) of the California Vehicle Code shall be enforced. Requirements for OHVs limit noise emissions to not more than 101 dBA when measured from a distance of 20 inches using test procedures established by the Society of Automotive Engineers under standard J-1287, as revised January, 1988.

Recreation Resources: No major recreation resource problems were identified for current use levels. The potential for grass fires is a concern during dry summer months, but spark arrestors, restrictions against open fires, and controlled burning of designated areas help reduce the risks. These policies should be continued. Should use of the unit increase, development of potentially-contaminated Area 39 may be desirable.

In general the unit should be made as attractive and inviting as possible to OHV users. This would include development/improvement of facilities such as picnic areas, concessions, and meeting space.

Policy

- Users will be informed of rules and hazards. Users should be made aware of the presence of rattlesnakes. Additional information may also be conveyed users such as area history, natural resources, historic resources or OHV riding information.
- Section 38366 of the Vehicle Code reads: (a) Notwithstanding Section 4442 of the Public Resources Code, and except for vehicles with mufflers as provided in Article 2 (commencing with Section 27150) of Chapter 5 of Division 12, no person shall use, operate, or allow to be used or operated, any off-highway motor vehicle, as defined in Section 38006, on any forest-covered land, brush-covered land, or grass-covered land unless the vehicle is equipped with a spark arrester maintained in effective working order.

Constraints and Sensitivities

Map #3 indicates locations of on-site constraints and sensitivities for all resource categories.

PRAIRIE CITY STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA (SVRA)

LAND USE AND FACILITIES ELEMENT

This element of the Master Plan describes the proposed use of the land at Prairie City State Vehicular Area. The goal of the OHV Division is to optimize OHV recreational opportunities consistent with the requirements of CH 1027/88, The Off-Highway Vehicle Act of 1988, and programs and policies identified in the Resource Element for resource protection and sustained long-term use. It is the intent of this element to maximize the OHV recreational opportunity while minimizing the amount of capital improvement necessary to meet the demand. The needs and desires of the recreating public will be balanced against constraints identified in other parts of the plan.

EXISTING CONDITION

Surrounding Land Use and Ownership: The land surrounding Prairie City SVRA on the east, south and west is largely open grazing or undeveloped land. A large tract of land of about 8,000 acres to the north of White Rock Road is owned by Aerojet-General Corporation and is used as a rocket propulsion laboratory. A 211 acre inholding along White Rock Road is being used for aggregate extraction. Also a few mobile home residences exist on the property.

Vehicular Access and Circulation: Prairie City SVRA is located about three miles south of the U.S. Highway 50 corridor. Access is south from U.S. 50 along Prairie City Road and one mile west on White Rock Road. The entry point on the south side of the road is marked with a sign. The entry road follows the west boundary south, about one mile before arriving at the main entrance station, in the extreme southwest corner of the unit. This is the main access for the off-road motorcycle riding area. An alternate access from U.S. 50, is south on Sunrise Blvd. to White Rock Road and 6 miles east to the unit entrance. About 300 yards west of the intersection of Prairie City Road and White Rock Road is a secondary entrance into the Four-Wheeled use area of the unit. This entrance is used for special events in the Four-Wheel Use area of the SVRA and for certain other special events. During special events it is the goal of the unit to keep a portion of the facility open to casual use. To do this, the secondary entrance may be used and or the main entrance used with a temporary entrance station located 1/2 mile into the unit where the event bound vehicles can be separated from those desiring casual use.

The exit plan for major events provides for traffic to exit from both the main and secondary entrances and allowing traffic to exit east on White Rock Road and on to Prairie City Road and west bound traffic to go southwest toward Elk Grove and Stockton or turn again onto White Rock Road and continue onto Sunrise Boulevard.

Existing Facilities: Prior uses of this land have left a number of facilities which provide a useful purpose in the present operation of Prairie City SVRA. The "Placer Mining" during the Gold Rush era has left about 200 acres of hydraulic dredger tailings which provide for challenging trail riding.

During the 1960's the Aerojet-General Corporation developed a rocket testing facility on the property. Several of the existing facilities were developed for that project. They include the following:

1. A potable water system including a 500,000 gallon storage tank, a pump, and a distribution system.
2. About 1 1/2 miles of asphaltic concrete paved roads.
3. An electrical distribution system including poles and lines which parallel the paved roads.
4. A building which appears as a concrete domed structure designed as a control center for the Aerojet rocket test project. The 8,000 square foot building has reinforced concrete walls 4' to 7' thick, and has two entries adjacent to one another.
5. A concrete rocket test pad site and pit exists at the end of the paved road in the center the unit.
6. A storage building on the north side of the rocket test pad.

During the time Sacramento County operated the OHV park (1983-1986), the following facilities were provided:

1. Hangtown Pro-track
2. A central staging area
3. Two practice tracks
4. Off-Road Car Track
5. Mud Drag facility

6. A thirty-five acre buffer zone along the eastern boundary.
7. BMX Bicycle track.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Room To Ride: The primary issue with Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation is finding a site to use for the recreation that is desired by the users, suitable for it from an environmental standpoint and in which the land use is compatible with adjacent land use. Prairie City SVRA is the only place in Sacramento County for the off-highway vehicle recreationist to practice their sport. Once a suitable site has been found, the next question is how much space is enough to accommodate the activities that are to be provided.

In other sports there is an acceptable size space to accommodate the activity such as a 9 or an 18 hole golf course and not a three hole course. Also, in down hill skiing, a multi million dollar support facility is not constructed to support a 50' down hill run. If an adequate experience for the particular sport is not offered, the customer will not patronize the facility. There is no documented standard for off-road motor cycle riding, however based on the experience of the OHMVR Division our recommendation is a minimum of about three thousand acres or and one hour of riding without retraversing the same trails. Although Prairie City does not meet this minimum, the State will maximize the opportunity by providing practice tracks and well designed trails incorporating a series of planned experiences and challenges.

Carrying Capacity: Carrying capacity is that number of visitors beyond which either the human experience is adversely impacted or the natural resources of the site are being compromised. There is another factor which occurs in SVRA's which must be considered, that is the safety factor. When the recreation type is Off-Highway Vehicles, another factor often comes into play before aesthetics or environmental protection. That is the point at which the accident rate rises sharply with additional increases in vehicles to the site.

Prairie City's Green Sticker "Role": There are three main levels of Off-Highway Vehicle demand:

1. The three to four hour drive to large tracks of Federal land
2. The two to three hour drive to a regional facility
3. The one hour or less drive to local or community facility

The "Green Sticker Program" is designed to satisfy demand in all three of these categories. Funds are provided to the Federal government for projects on large tracts of public land, to local municipalities for community projects, and the State Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Program operates seven State Vehicular Recreation Area's (SVRA) which are intended to be regional facilities.

Regional Demand: Prairie City SVRA is the only off-highway vehicle facility open to casual riding in Sacramento County. There are a number of riding opportunities 2 + hours away, however a demand exists for opportunities to ride after work or school, and for a few hours on the weekend. The DMV registration figures for May 1990 show the following numbers of off-highway vehicles in Sacramento County:

registered motorcycles	6,475
registered ATV's	1,336

Users looking for large tracts of federal land in the 2 + hour travel time zone, can find such opportunity in the El Dorado and the Tahoe National Forests. The OHMVR Grant Program has funded 12 project areas in these forests for a total of \$4.8 million.

Prairie City SVRA is too small and is without significant features which would cause it to draw users from great enough distance as to classify it as a regional unit. The majority of it's users will travel one hour or less to get to the unit. Therefore the Master Plan has been oriented toward supplying the needs associated with a community facility.

The intent of the Plan is that one Special Event will not close the unit to casual use in most cases and in fact in some cases two or more events may occur with casual use continuing.

Non-Green Sticker Uses: Sacramento County is a rapidly developing county with little open space left. Many activities therefore, that require substantial space have difficulty in finding it within the county. As a result, there have been numerous requests for space for non-green sticker programs to be allowed use of some portion of Prairie City SVRA.. One example of a non-green sticker program is the Quarter Midget Racers who had county approved use of the site prior to the State taking control. Because of the already crowded condition of the facility these requests will be judged based upon the following criteria:

1. The proposal will not remove usable riding space from the SVRA.

2. The proposer must pay commensurate fees for their use of the facility.

Limits Imposed by Soils: Most of the soils in the motor cycle riding areas are high in expansive clays. Following a rain the trails become very slick and the vehicles load up rapidly with mud which seriously impacts the riding opportunity.

The 4-wheel area of the unit also has high clay content in the surface soil and an underlying impervious layer (hard pan) that sometimes can result in extremely soggy conditions. During heavy rains the soil becomes completely saturated so that even a light weight vehicle sinks and the suction power makes it difficult to extract a vehicle once stuck.

In contrast once these soils dry they become very hard causing a significant decline in their riding desirability.

Possible solutions to enhancing the riding opportunity for the off season are to provide tracks that can be intensively managed. A sprinkler system on the track to incorporate water and equipment to work the soil, will make a rideable facility during the dry season. Riding during the wet season can be improved by designing the track to drain and incorporating soil amendments which will allow for faster drainage.

Buffer Area: The buffer area is about 35 acres and contiguous with Scott Road along the eastern boundary. It has been set aside to protect vernal pools which provide habitat for several endangered plant species. The vernal pools exist because of some very impervious soils which hold water for long periods during the spring rainy season. The buffer also serves as a scenic easement for Scott Road which has been identified as a Scenic County Road.

Unit Expansion: Previous portions of this section on issues have documented the demand for more room to fully meet the OHV recreational need of Sacramento County and surrounding area. Many county OHV recreationists fulfill their quest for riding opportunity through unauthorized riding on vacant land. Because of the rapid growth of the county this is an opportunity that is quickly disappearing. The Department of Finance Census and Data Center is projecting a 16% growth rate for Sacramento County through the 1990's.

Because of an already too small unit and given the projected county growth rate, it is imperative that the State adopt an aggressive expansion plan for the unit. The zone of interest map on page 43 delineates the general land area around the unit that the State would be interested in. This should not be

considered a commitment that the State will buy any specified piece of property.

LAND USE GOALS

The land use goals identified in this plan will not be immediately implemented after the plan is adopted, but they are objectives that the land manager will implement over time commensurate with demand, funding and staffing. The dominate theme of this section is that the land uses in the plan must be versatile allowing as much as possible for multiple use. This is necessary because, as has been mentioned previously, the size of the unit is not large enough to satisfy all the local demands.

The following are some specific land use goals:

1. Design areas as much as possible to serve multiple uses, such as, the same parking area serving two special event areas.
2. Separate the 4-wheel area and the motor cycle areas by fence, and also fence special event areas for safety and to allow concurrent casual riding and special events.
3. A satisfactory balance will be sought between track areas which allow more riding opportunity per acre of land and space for casual riding.
4. Maintain the largest area possible for casual motorcycle riding.
5. Provide only for day use, because the greater majority of users are within the one to two hour travel time zone.
6. Continue the tree planting program to provide shade in the staging areas and to improve the aesthetic appearance of the unit.
7. Continue to protect the buffer area from OHV use. A visual plant screen should be developed along the fence line between the riding area and the buffer zone. Care will be taken not to impact the vernal pools.
8. Intensively test the restricted zone for toxic substances, and if dangerous levels of any toxic substance are not found, the State Health

Department will be asked to clear the site for public use.

9. Develop a designed trail system for the unit that can receive regular grooming and that will offer challenges desired by the users.
10. Develop and implement habitat management plans.

FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

An important objective of this plan is to provide a maximum of riding opportunity with a minimum dollar expenditure. Many of the facilities needed to accomplish this are already in place. The following is a list of those facilities identified on the plan that will be implemented when user demand shows the need:

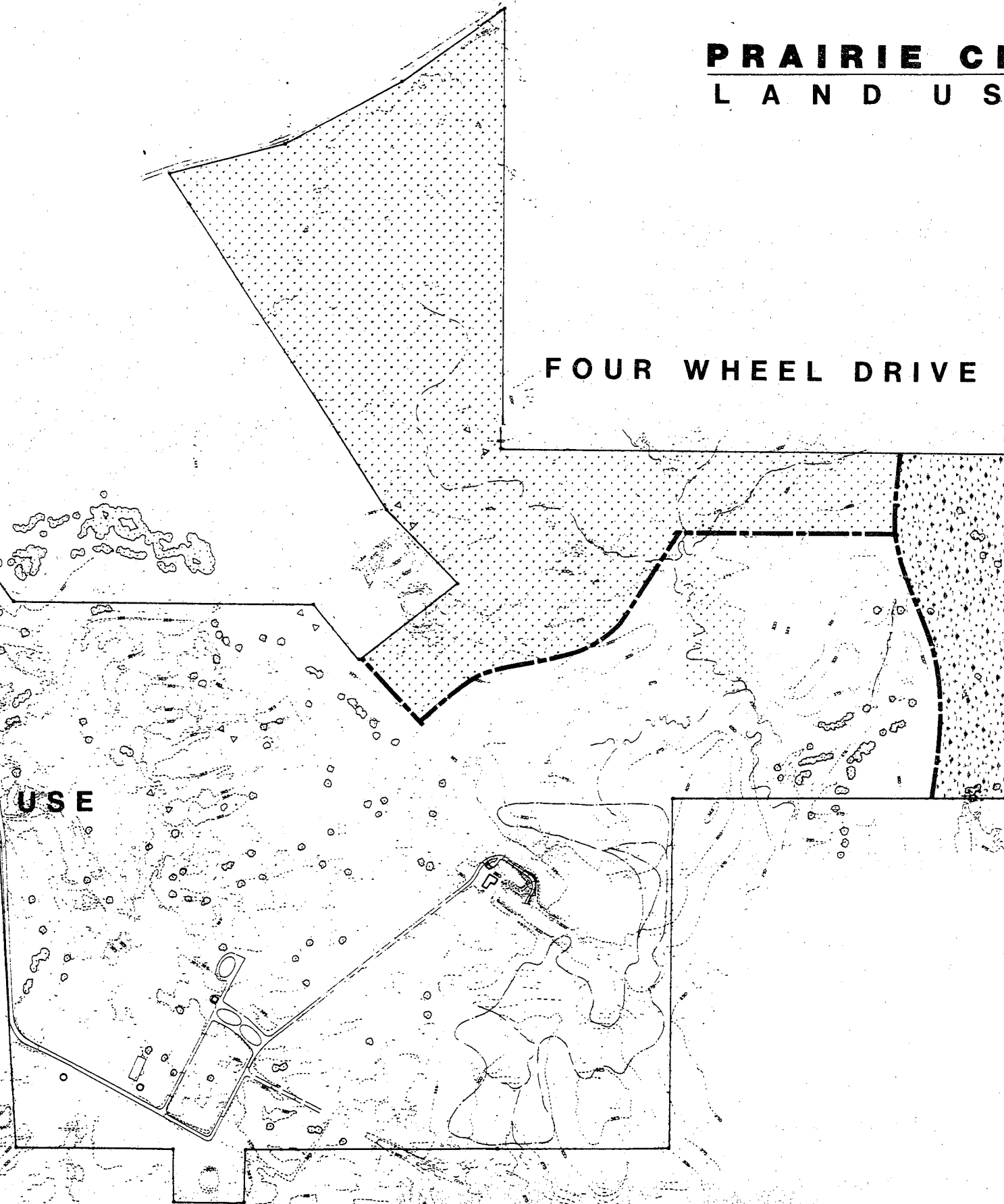
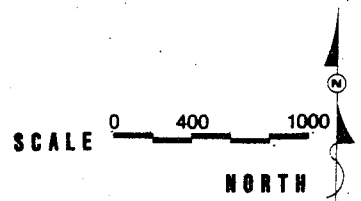
1. 4x4 obstacle course
2. A sand drag course
3. An additional staging area
4. A third practice track
5. A go-cart track
6. Food and parts concession
7. Permanent sanitary facilities to serve the day to day demand
8. A permanent office building

PRAIRIE CITY SVRA
LAND USE PLAN

FOUR WHEEL DRIVE USE

BUFFER ZONE

MOTORCYCLE / A T V USE

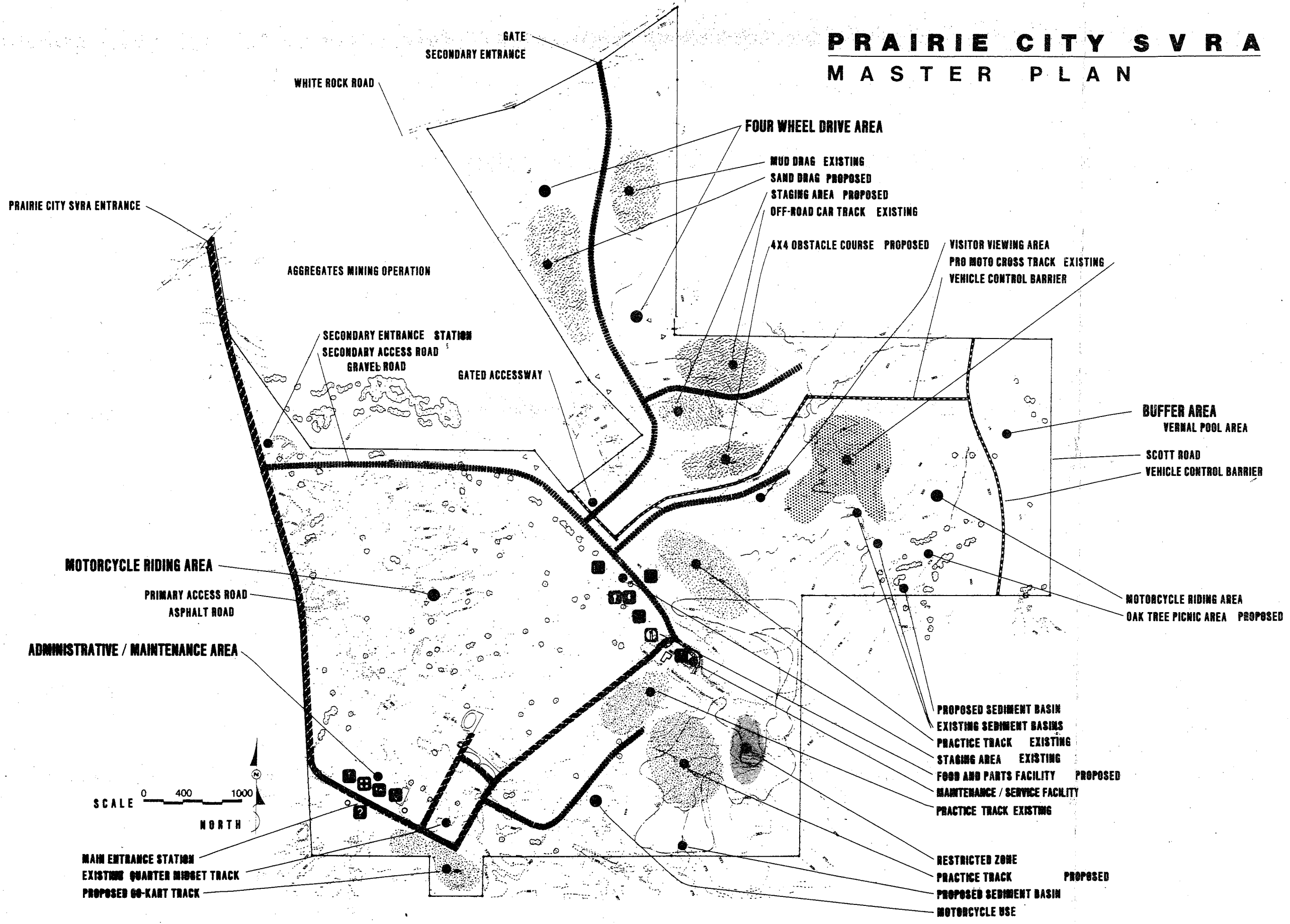


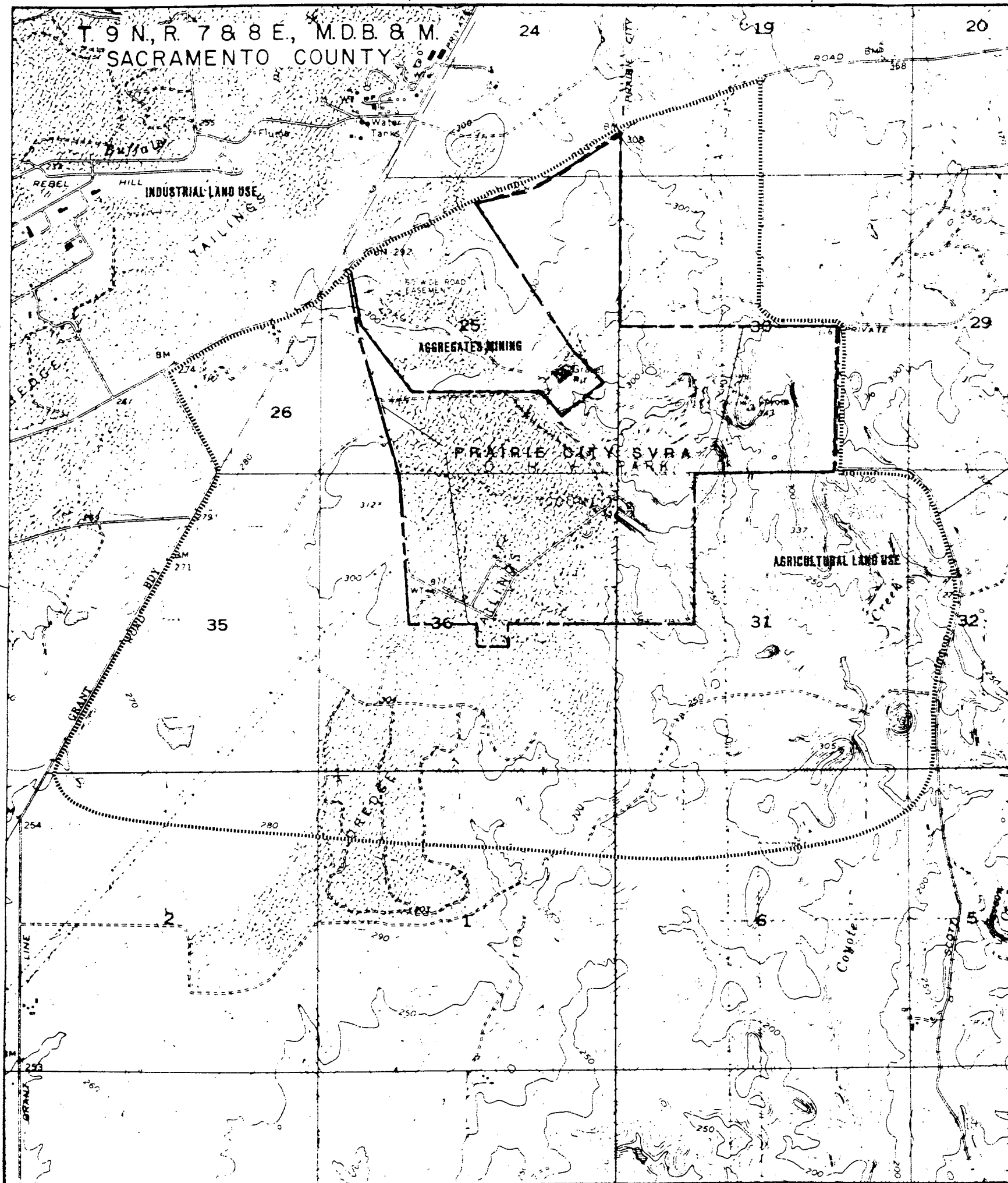
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DATE		
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RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION		
APPROVED _____ DATE _____		
PRAIRIE CITY SVRA - MASTER PLAN LAND USE		
DRAWING NO. 26615.01		
SHEET NO.		
OF Page 41		

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REVISIONS	
RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION APPROVED _____ DATE _____	
PRAIRIE CITY SVRA - MASTER PLAN FACILITIES	
DRAWING NO. 26515	
SHEET NO. OF Page 42	

PRAIRIE CITY SVRA

MASTER PLAN





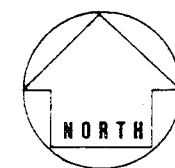
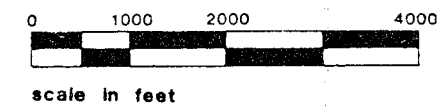
PRairie City SVRA SURROUNDING LAND USE

ZONE OF INTEREST

The acreage contained within this "ZONE OF INTEREST LINE" along with the existing unit is about 3000 acres. This meets what the OHMVR Division considers to be minimum size for an SVRA and also will accommodate facilities necessary to meet the needs of the users in the Sacramento Valley Region.

NOTE:

"Potential acquisition proposals shown here are intended for long-range planning purposes only and are not a commitment for acquisition."



MAP 6

DESIGNED	DATE	REVISIONS	APPROVED	DATE
DRAWN LVM				
CHECKED				
RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION				
PRAIRIE CITY SVRA - MASTER PLAN SURROUNDING LAND USE				
DRAWING No. 25515.02				
SHEET No. OF Page 43				

PRAIRIE CITY STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA (SVRA)

OPERATIONS ELEMENT

The Operations Element records the present operations program and the management standard set by the State from the opening of the unit in April 1989 to the present. The standard of management is important because before the end of the 90/91 fiscal year a bid will be let for the operation of the unit by a private operator.

This element also identifies existing or potential operations problems and strategies for dealing with all elements of the Master Plan.

EXISTING SITUATION

A. Operational Summary:

The District is one of five within the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division of the California Department of Parks and Recreation. The current staff consists of a District Superintendent I, two Rangers I's, one Ranger I (P.I.), a Park Maintenance Chief I, a State Park Equipment Operator and is currently supplemented with two inmate prison crews consisting of 24-30 inmates and two state employed crew leaders. Routine duties are also completed through several service contracts.

The District Superintendent is the supervising peace officer for the ranger staff. The District's peace officers conduct routine law enforcement duties which include:

Operation of major special events, coordination with local law enforcement agencies, security and crime prevention programs, crime reporting, identification of hazards, fire suppression, search, rescue and first-aid, and public information and education. The District's peace officers also collect and report fees, inspect vehicles entering the unit for registration, noise, and spark arrestor requirements, operate the sign program, and conduct interpretive activities.

Visitor Safety is a primary concern of the District's staff. Rangers identify hazards and maintenance personnel correct them. Visitor use patterns are designed with safety in mind. Tracks and pit areas are fenced for safe one-directional riding, trails are widened and marked for safety, visitor access to the

unit is controlled at several points to allow for multi-uses and off-street stacking and signs are posted throughout the unit for information and education of visitors. All terrain vehicle rider safety courses are conducted within the unit by authorized state training organizations. The District also conducts a youth awareness and outreach program to train area youths in safe all terrain vehicle operations.

The maintenance of the unit is carried out through a variety of methods. Tracks, trails and staging areas are maintained by the unit's Heavy Equipment Operator primarily using the District's equipment fleet. Occasionally heavy equipment may be borrowed from other Districts or leased as needed. The Equipment Operator also repairs and installs water, electric, and sewer lines, grades unpaved roads, plants trees, installs fences and participates in resource management projects.

Routine maintenance of toilets, shop, office and storage buildings along with litter pick-up and removal, weeding, landscape maintenance and other daily details are completed by inmate labor crews and private contractors under the direction of the Park Maintenance Chief. Major and minor capital outlay projects are planned and budgeted for and primarily completed by contract.

Visitors currently have access to the unit four days per week between the hours of eight a.m. and sunset. Casual day riding has steadily increased as the unit has developed and news has reached the riding public. Special events such as moto-cross, cross country, off-road car, quarter midget car and mud drag races are held up to thirty times a year. These events draw anywhere from 200 to 10,000 visitors. The unit has been designed to accommodate one to three special events and casual day use riding at the same time. Only the largest of the events or cross country races close the entire park for casual use. These types of events are therefore limited. Environmentally sensitive areas have been closed or to various degrees restricted. Visitors can enter the unit at various locations. Casual users enter at the main entrance area and are greeted by District personnel. During special events visitors can enter through the main gates or at two other locations. These locations may be staffed by District personnel, volunteers or race promoter staff.

B. Concession Operation

The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division by law (S.B. 2659, as amended, Doolittle, "CH 1210 of the Budget Act of 1988.") must publish a prospectus which invites private business to bid for the operation of Prairie City State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA). Therefore assuming a satisfactory bidder is found the future operation of the unit will be handled by a private operator.

It is well documented in the Master Plan that the State has established a level of service to the public which must be continued in the future operation. The goals and objectives identified in this element are applicable regardless of the organization chosen to be responsible for operation of the facility.

C. Special Considerations

The limited size of the unit is the overriding limitation to its development. At 836 acres it is considerably less than half the minimum size required to operate at desired levels. Staff limitations also constrain the operation by restricting the days and hours available for public use.

Other limiting factors deal mainly with environmental concerns. PRC Section 5090.35 requires extensive soil loss standards and wildlife enhancement activities. Vernal pools with rare species and an old growth oak grove require specialized management techniques. Undesirable exotic plant species and a large portion of the unit altered in the past through gold dredging activities also require additional management techniques and staffing requirements. All of these factors could limit riding opportunities without special considerations.

II. MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

A. Goals And Objectives

1. Construct And Maintain Facilities Identified In The Plan.
2. Provide Adequate Funding And Staffing To Operate The Unit At State Standards Through:
 - a. Utilization of the budget process.
 - b. Interagency agreements.
 - c. Volunteerism.

d. Concession agreements

3. Insure The Health And Safety Of Visitors And Staff

By:

- a. Law enforcement presence and crime prevention program.
- b. Adequate emergency first-aid training and equipment.
- c. Maintenance of water, waste and sewer systems at state standards.
- d. Resolving issues related to toxics and air borne pollutants.
- e. Insuring a safe work environment for employees and volunteers in accordance with CAL-OSHA standards.

4. Provide For Resource Management At A Level That Addresses Major Requirements:

- a. Soil loss standards.
- b. Wildlife habitat protection.
- c. Revegetation, sediment collection and prescribed burn programs.
- d. Protection of rare and endangered plants and animals.

5. Implement Public Education And Information Programs:

- a. Interpretive program.
- b. Youth awareness and outreach program.
- c. Public relations.
- d. Visitor services activities.

6. Real Property Management:

- a. Resolve trespass or encroachments as they occur.
- b. Conduct investigations and budget for land acquisition.

7. Provide For Special Use Permits:

- a. Conduct various user orientated special events.
- b. Meet all required regulations and insurance requirements
- c. Design concession contract to allow user groups to conduct their own events

8. Maintain Liaison With Outside Agencies To Assist In Implementation Of The Above Objectives.

B. Operational Problems, Solutions And Strategies

1. Limited Size Of The Unit: The unit currently is small in size as compared to other State Vehicular Recreation Areas. The demand is steadily increasing and the diversity of activities compresses the unit into even smaller use areas.

The unit needs to continue to be operated to provide for the maximum rider opportunity for the diversity of uses desired. To expand these opportunities the unit needs to increase in size. All adjacent properties have been investigated for possible inclusion into the unit. Budget preparations have been made to acquire some of these properties if and when they become available. This needs to continue until the unit reaches optimum operational size.

The number and types of activities and facilities outlined in the Master Plan make this approach essential.

2. Traffic Control On Adjacent County Roads: The unit currently conducts up to thirty special events per year. These events can host up to 10,000 visitors at a time. Casual day use is and should not be a traffic problem unless connected with a simultaneous special event. Traffic tends to only be a problem at the end of the events as most visitors will leave at one time. Traffic must exit onto Whiterock Road east or west. Without proper planning and control this important County road could be adversely impacted.

The current operation plans include the use of two exits to reduce the impact on one location. Mutual aid from the California Highway Patrol and the County Sheriff's Office and from other state units is employed to control traffic entering White Rock Road.

The Master Plan addresses the road infrastructure within the unit along with fence and gating patterns. These plans will maximize traffic flow within the unit; however, it is essential that some roads be brought up to all weather standards and that all roads be maintained at state standards.

3. Possible Toxic Site Evaluation: In the 1960's Aerojet General Corporation owned the land now in the unit. They conducted rocket testing

activities which included burning excess fuels. One area identified as Site 39 has been determined to be a possible toxic site. The area has been fenced off and closed to the public. Aerojet conducted testing of the site and has found no toxic substances above legal limits present. The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Division has tested surrounding area water runoff and the unit's well and found no contaminants.

To fully develop the facilities described in the Master Plan and to maximize riding opportunities the State Department of Health needs to certify Site 39 as usable by the public. If clean-up operations are required they need to be detailed, budgeted for, and completed as soon as possible.

4. Dredger Tailing Terrain: From the late 1800's to the early 1950's parts of the unit were dredged for gold. During these operations, areas were flooded and large floating dredges excavated the area pulling up and depositing river cobbles on the surface. This cobbled area makes off-highway vehicle operation difficult. Two solutions exist to remedy this problem. First, the cobbles could be removed, however, they may be as deep as thirty feet making it impractical to remove all the cobbles. Some of the surface cobbles could be removed and fill material could be placed over the remaining cobbles. The area could then be contoured. Secondly a trail system could be constructed and fill material used just on the established trails. This would be more cost effective but could eliminate some riding areas.

The Master Plan designates this area as open riding and operational plans should attempt to incorporate as much as the area as possible.

5. Multi-Simultaneous Special Events And Casual Day Use: The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission Policy number 31 refers to competition in state funded facilities. The Policy encourages competition while recognizing that others are better equipped to sponsor these events. A variety of specialized user groups conduct numerous special events within the unit. The basic mission of the unit is to provide for casual day riding. Currently, the unit has been fenced into separate user areas. Casual day use can occur with up to four simultaneous special events;

however, the casual use area is reduced in size. The entire park is also closed to accommodate cross country races and large moto-cross races that need to utilize the entire park to make the event feasible. These types of events are restricted to three or four per year and in scope to events that would generally interest the casual use rider and give them a chance to compete in an organized event if they desired.

The Master Plan outlines these same use areas and provides for the continuation of special events. Adequate staffing must be maintained to meet operational needs. Existing and additional visitor control techniques will be required. It is essential that special events continue to be operated in such a way that casual day riding can be maximized.

6. Soil Loss Standards And Wildlife Habitat Protection: Existing laws require that the unit meets standardized soil loss and wildlife habitat protection requirements.

A potential conflict arises in that the requirement of these laws and the extensive use of the unit, as outlined in the Master Plan, may severely limit rider opportunity given the small size of the unit. Management techniques must take these concerns into account at each development phase of the Master Plan. All requirements can be met and riding opportunity maximized by the effective use of tracks, specialized use areas and a designated trail system. Some areas between these use areas may be developed as permanent vegetative belts to stabilize soils and maintain permanent habitat, while other use areas can be rotated through a restoration process. Adequate funding, staffing, and planning will be an integral part of these operations.

7. Suburban Encroachment, Adjacent Land Uses: Sacramento County has been rapidly developing in all directions. The rural lands as close as two miles from the unit have been developed for industrial and residential uses. Land adjacent to the unit is owned by major corporations and the possibility of extensive development next to the unit is imminent. Currently adjacent land uses include cattle grazing, rocket development and testing, mining and aggregate by-product

manufacturing. The industrial uses all impact the unit to some degree. Burning of spent rocket fuel sends air borne pollutants into the unit, aggregate production produces increased traffic on access routes to the unit, dust and noise pollution are also by-products of these operations.

The full implementation of the Master Plan will increase visitor use of the unit while at the same time increased surrounding development will bring the unit into direct conflict with these users.

Management practices should include constant monitoring of potential threats from adjacent land users. At the same time the activities and conditions that prevail within the unit should be monitored to insure minimal impacts to adjacent users. Activities that directly affect the health and safety of visitors must be addressed to insure that public health standards are met.

8. Adequate Staffing Levels: The unit is currently operated with seven permanent positions and one seasonal position. As attendance increases and more facilities are constructed additional staffing may be required to provide visitor and maintenance services. Legislation requires the Division to let a bid for concession operation of the unit by end of the 90/91 fiscal year. The contract for concession operation of the unit will stipulate minimum staffing levels and a required level of service delivered to the user. The State will continue operation of the unit if an acceptable bidder is not found.

C. Operational Impacts

1. Visitor Services: A fully implemented Master Plan may require additional staffing. The current staffing level is minimal. The staffing level should be adequate to staff the fully implemented Master Plan with the following exceptions:
 - a. If attendance substantially increases over expected levels additional help may be required to collect fees.
 - b. If additional land is acquired and additional facilities built corresponding increases in staffing may be required.

- c. If the operation of the unit is expanded to meet public demand from four days of operation per week to seven days, additional full time visitor service and part-time seasonal staff will be required.

2. Maintenance Services: Maintenance equipment is sufficient to operate a fully implemented master plan with the exception of of a crawler tractor of sufficient size to accomplish required tasks. Maintenance staff will need to be increased to maintain additional facilities identified in the plan.
3. Administrative Services: Administrative staff is minimal; however, it could meet the needs of a fully implemented master plan.

The Master Plan addresses the needs of an operational center within the unit. The existing leased office trailer would be replaced by a permanent structure under the plan and this would address long term administrative services needs.

D. Volunteerism

The District has established a volunteer organization to assist with the operation of the unit. Organization efforts have produced over fifty volunteers with additional persons signing up on a regular basis. Key volunteers have been assigned to assist staff with organization and operation of the volunteer group.

Initially the volunteers duty statement is focused on the operation of specific facilities, such as race tracks, that are not currently available for general public use. Volunteers will assist staff in operating these facilities. They will provide for maintenance, user screening for ability levels, and user safety of these facilities.

Volunteers as individuals and as groups have assisted the unit in the construction of various facilities and in improving other existing facilities. Projects include fence installation and repair, installing water lines, grooming tracks, building special use areas, planting trees, maintaining structures, etc. These efforts assist the District in providing for user riding opportunities and should continue and expand in the future.

Volunteers require coordination by a full time visitor services staff member on a part time basis. The control, planning and organization of the program is directed by the District Superintendent.

Volunteers are estimated to contribute between two and four personnel years of time for the District every year. This represents \$30,000 to \$60,000 in current dollar value savings per year based on seasonal employee wages.

PRAIRIE CITY STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA (SVRA)

INTERPRETIVE ELEMENT

The Interpretive Element of the Prairie City SVRA Master Plan is guided by the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Commission's Policy Number 23, (Interpretation) which is reproduced below in its entirety.

Commission Policy Number 23

"The Department of Parks and Recreation shall interpret the units of the SVRAT System. Information shall be presented objectively and in accordance with the highest standards of the profession."

"A quality interpretive experience is essential to promote public safety, as well as understanding, appreciation, and concern for the environment. Programs shall be easily available, tailored to diverse human needs, and meaningfully structured."

" In planning, development, and implementation of interpretive programs in the units of the SVRAT System, the division shall identify and emphasize all interpretive values and objectives for each unit by requiring the preparation of an 'interpretive plan' as part of the master plan."

"A continuous effort must be maintained to assure that all personnel of the division, including seasonal employees, are oriented and appropriately trained to carry out the objectives of the interpretive programs. OHV commissioners shall have opportunities to review and comment on interpretive materials for statewide distribution before they are printed."

I. Existing Situation

A. Interpretive Summary

. Existing Facilities and Programs

- a. ATV Junior Ranger Program - A youth awareness and out-reach program designed to inform, educate and train young visitors in the proper use of all terrain vehicles. The course contains extensive information on environmental issues.
- b. Safety Display Center - A series of safety interpretive panels graphically displaying safety rules, regulations and guidelines. The

panels are strategically located within the unit.

- c. Brochures, Maps - Available to each visitor, these hand-outs inform the public of recreational resources within the unit.
- d. School Group Presentations - An interpretive program to explain the resources available within the unit and directed towards people who normally do not visit the unit.
- e. Informative Signing - Located throughout the unit to inform and direct visitor use patterns and to educate visitors on various management projects.

1. Special Considerations

- a. Vernal Pools - Vernal pools are rapidly disappearing throughout California. The few remaining pools are usually located on public lands. These pools contain rare plants animals and provide wintering grounds for migratory water-fowl. Several of these pools have been protected within the unit's buffer zone.
- b. Oak Grove - Oak trees are on the decline throughout the State. The remaining old growth oaks need to be protected and interpreted to show their significance in the natural environment. A small stand of trees is located in the eastern portion of the unit.
- c. Wildlife - A variety of wildlife lives in or visits the unit on a regular basis. Coyotes, wild turkeys, pheasants, ducks, dove, deer and raptors can be seen by visitors while riding through the unit.
- d. History - Gold mining and the aerospace industries have extensively used the area in the recent past and left their heavy mark upon the landscape. Interpretive efforts will help explain these unusual features.

II. Master Plan Implementation

A. Goals and Objectives

- 1. Interpret the natural, cultural and historic features within the unit.

2. Gain visitor appreciation and support for the features and programs within the unit.
3. Help protect the natural and historic features in the unit through an increased awareness of their significance.
4. Increase the visitors understanding of the natural processes occurring in the unit.
5. Develop interpretive display panels to include:
 - a. Unit History
 1. Gold Mining days.
 2. The Aerospace years.
 - b. Wildlife
 - c. Vegetation
 1. Revegetation project descriptions.
 2. Soil erosion control and related project work.
 - d. Vernal Pools
 1. The fauna
 - a. Fairy shrimp.
 - b. Tadpole shrimp.
 - c. Spade-footed toad.
 2. The flora
 - e. Display cases and other related materials in the administrative area.
6. Continue and expand the ATV Junior Ranger Program.
7. Develop a self-guided nature trail in environmentally unique areas such as the buffer zone.
8. Conduct ranger led off-highway vehicle trail rides.
9. Broaden the unit's interpretive school programs.
10. Involve the unit's volunteer organization in interpretive activities.
11. Develop "pocket" cards or other materials to hand out to visitors during personal contacts. These materials would interpret natural, cultural, historical or safety information about the unit's resources.
12. Refine and expand the unit's slide program for use in interpretive presentations to include:
 - a. Safety.
 - b. Natural features and their protection and restoration.
 - c. Historical features.
 - d. Recreational activities and special events.

B. Interpretive Program Problems, Strategies - Adverse Impact

There are currently no substantial obstacles to the implementation of the goals and objectives of this program. The full implementation of the Master Plan should not adversely impact the operation of the unit's interpretive efforts. The only exception would be the additional workloads created for both visitor and maintenance services by the implementation of the Master Plan. These concerns have been addressed in budget submittals and with the requested augmentations the program should proceed unimpeded.

PRAIRIE CITY STATE VEHICULAR RECREATION AREA (SVRA)

CONCESSIONS ELEMENT

Introduction

Concession operations within this State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) shall be governed in part by Public Resources Code, Section 5080.02 et seq. and by the California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission Policies (especially OHMVR Policy No. 19).

General Definition: A concession is defined as authority to permit specific use of State Vehicular Recreation Area lands and/or facilities for a specific period of time. The intent is to provide the public with goods, services, or facilities which the Department cannot provide as conveniently or efficiently, or to permit the limited use of State Vehicular Area lands for other purposes compatible with the public interest, and consistent with the Public Resource Code.

Purpose: It is the OHMVR Division's policy to enter into concession contracts for the provision of services, products, facilities, programs, management, and visitor services which will provide for the enhancement of visitor use and enjoyment, as well as visitor safety and convenience. Such concessions should not create added financial burdens on the State, and wherever possible, shall reduce costs and/or generate revenues to aid in maintaining and expanding the SVRA System.

Compatibility: Concession developments, programs, or services must be compatible with this unit's classification as a State Vehicular Recreation Area and with the unit's objectives and master plan provisions.

Attractions Unto Themselves: Concessions which relate to SVRA activities can be attractions unto themselves.

Planning: Concession opportunities may be considered at all stages of planning and operation.

General Concession Policies

1. The economic feasibility of proposed concessions shall be studied to determine viability as well as contract terms and conditions. Final approval for development and operation of a proposed concession will be made by

the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation.

2. It is the policy of the OHMVR Division to cultivate and encourage small businesses and ethnic minorities as concessionaires.
3. It is the OHMVR Division policy to generally avoid entering into convenience-type concession agreements for facilities, products, or programs that are adequately provided for a short distance outside the unit boundaries, when such travel will neither unduly endanger or inconvenience visitors, nor lead to unreasonable consumption of transportation fuels.
4. It is the policy of the OHMVR Division that concessions will provide facilities, products, programs, or services at prices competitive with similar businesses outside the SVRAT System unit.

Limitations

Appropriate concession activities for the SVRAT unit are limited to:

1. Concessions that do not unnecessarily commercially exploit the resources.
2. Special events.
3. Commercial/retail-type concessions for which there is a need.
4. Concessions which enhance the SVRAT theme and policies.
5. The water plant facilities and building shall not be utilized for direct commercial gain by the concessionaire. The plant site should not be an area of public access. The goal is to operate and maintain the water plant as a support facility for the entire park operation.

Current Conditions Which Relate to Concessions

The facilities which currently lend themselves to concession use potential are summarized as follows:

1. Park access/entry kiosk (4'x 8' portable wood frame).
2. Mud drag facility.

3. Off-road car track.
4. Pro motocross track.
5. Practice Track
6. 90cc Track
7. Quarter midget track.
8. Staging Area
9. Park-wide hare scramble areas/trails.
10. Moon Room: A 12,000 square foot concrete multi-storied circular domed structure.
11. A 25'x 40' concrete building adjacent to staging area and near the future concession modular structure.
12. A 6'x 7' wood frame building with pay phone inside at the quarter midget track area.
13. A concession building, 15'x 21' wood frame, with sink, electricity, and plumbing at quarter midget area.
14. A 30'x 60' metal shop and garage building in the current operation headquarters area.

Proposed and Potential Concession Uses

1. Store.
 - a. OHV supplies, accessories and rental items.
 - b. OHV parts.
 - c. Food and beverages (excluding beer and wine) and including satellite vending machines.
 - d. Camping supplies for special event staging areas with fully contained (RV) units.
2. Storage space rental for off-highway vehicles.
 - a. The moon room.
 - b. The 25'x 40' concrete building.
 - c. The 30'x 60' metal building.

3. Concession warehousing.
 - a. All existing facilities at concessionaire's disposal.
 - b. Exclude the 8'x 8' water control building and water plant.
4. The 15'x 21' wood frame building at the quarter midget track area should be used as a rental concession outlet.
5. Possible sites for repair and preparation of user's vehicles.
 - a. The 25' x40' (concrete) building.
 - b. The 30'x 60' (metal) building.
6. Large equipment storage.
 - a. The 300'x 150' operations yard.
 - b. Various operation yard buildings.
7. Competitive and special event sites.
 - a. Mud drag.
 - b. Off-road car track.
 - c. Pro motocross track.
 - d. 4'x 4' obstacle course.*
 - e. Sand drag course.*
 - f. Multi-use go cart track.*
 - g. Hare scramble trails.
 - h. Various staging and picnic areas.
8. Meeting hall rental space.
 - a. Via a modular unit, possible located at part of the concession office.

Maintenance

The State's goal is for the total unit area and facilities to

*Proposed and currently non-existent.

be maintained to the highest standards of health and safety as well as for the enhancement and protection of resources. Trail development and maintenance responsibilities must be part of the concession. All maintenance standards must be equivalent to those levels established by the OHMVR Division of the State Department of Parks and Recreation.

Alcoholic Beverages

The sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages on SVRA land shall be dictated by OHMVR Commission Policy Number 6. Because of the State's need to protect the health and safety of park visitors and its duty to preserve the peace within the SVRA unit, the sale of alcoholic beverages within Prairie City SVRA boundaries is generally prohibited unless expressly authorized under limited exceptions detailed in Policy 6.

General

An active concessions presence in the unit is necessary in order to properly serve the needs of the public and enhance the recreational use and enjoyment of the SVRA

It is the State's intent that the concessionaire assume complete operation of Prairie City SVRA including but not limited to the supervision of daily casual OHV use, providing all competitive events, providing adequate police and emergency medical protection at all times, providing for all proposed development, performing all maintenance and operational tasks utilizing concessionaire provided equipment. The State will periodically inspect the facility to determine that all applicable OHMVR standards and policies as well as Public Resource Code Sections are being carried out and the public is being provided a facility to recreate in that is both attractive and safe.